

## **CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE AMERICAN RECOVERY ACT FUNDS WILL UPDATE VA HEALTH FACILITIES SERVING MARYLAND VETERANS**

*Bill also includes funds to restore Maryland's national cemeteries.*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Benjamin L. Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski (both D-Md.) today announced the economic recovery package, signed into law by President Obama last month, honors the nation's commitment to provide the best health care available to its veterans by putting funds in the federal checkbook for upgrades and improvements to Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities serving Maryland veterans. The bill also includes funds to restore Maryland's national cemeteries. Senator Mikulski is a senior member of the Appropriations Committee. Senator Cardin is a member of the Budget Committee.

“Our nation's veterans deserve the best and that is why I am so pleased that the economic recovery package will provide needed funding to improve their health care and to make needed upgrades at national cemeteries,” said Senator Cardin. “We made certain promises to our veterans and this economic recovery package will help us keep them.”

“Whether fighting to defend democracy overseas or standing sentry on the home front, America's veterans have been there for us. We have a sacred commitment to honor all of the promises made to them when they signed up to fight for us. Chief among these promises is providing our veterans the world-class health care they deserve,” Senator Mikulski said. “That's why I am working hard every day in the U.S. Senate to ensure that the federal government maintains its commitment to veterans. Promises made must be promises kept.”

Economic recovery funds were targeted to improve VA medical facilities and national cemeteries, provide grants to assist states in acquiring or constructing state nursing homes and domiciliaries, and to remodel, modify or alter existing facilities to provide the best care for veterans.

The bill includes \$46.29 million for repairs and renovations to the following VA medical facilities where Maryland veterans receive care:

- \$16.73 million for upgrades and repairs to the Perry Point Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC). Funds will be used to upgrade the patient security system, replace building exteriors, upgrade heating and ventilation systems, repair roads and sidewalks near the facility, and replace the facility's aging roof.
- \$15.39 million for upgrades and repairs to the Washington DC VA Medical Center (DCVAMC). Funds will be used to implement energy conservation measures,

replace the sprinkler system, upgrade the dental area, and renovate the pharmacy and radiology areas.

- \$11.1 million for the Martinsburg Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC). Funds will be used to upgrade heating, venting and air conditioning systems, upgrade environmental monitoring systems, relocate the mailroom to mitigate security vulnerability and replace the Nurse Call/Code Blue System.
- \$2.5 million for the Baltimore Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC). Funds will be used to upgrade and repair the facility's electrical distribution system, repair roofs, renovate the food court and replace steam traps.
- \$570,000 for the Loch Raven Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic. Funds will be used to replace the fire alarm system, construct a low vision clinic, and study and provide recommendations for drainage systems.

Maryland national cemeteries also received \$517,985 for the following projects:

- \$130,000 for repairs to the Loudon Park National Cemetery in Baltimore, Maryland. Funds will be used to restore and repair the Maryland Sons Monument, one of the most historically significant monuments in the National Cemetery Administration, the Unknown Dead Monument, the Grand Army of the Republic Monument and the Maryland Naval Monument.
- \$250,000 for repairs to the Soldiers and Sailors Monument at the Point Lookout Confederate Cemetery in Ridge, Maryland.
- \$137, 985 for maintenance and equipment for the Baltimore National Cemetery. Funds will be used to repair sidewalks and purchase new tractor equipment.

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